

## Message Text

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63

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 /051 W

----- 099392

R 142045Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8847

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

USIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 0205

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, NU

SUBJECT: STATE OF SIEGE MAY BE LIFTED SOON

REF MANAGUA 0008

1. DURING MEETING WITH PRESIDENT SOMOZA IN HIS OFFICE JANUARY 13, I WAS TOLD THAT THE CABINET HAD RECOMMENDED AGAINST ENDING THE STATE OF SIEGE (AND IPSO FACTO PRESS CENSORSHIP). HE SIAD THAT PRESS CENSORSHIP WOULD REMAIN IN FORCE FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE, BUT THAT HE INTENDED TO RELAX THE CENSOR'S GRIP.

2. PRESIDENT SOMOZA ADMITTED THAT THE FSLN THREAT HAD EASED IN RECENT MONTHS. NEVERTHELESS, HE WAS PERSUADED THAT WHEN ALL FACTORS ARE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT PRESS CENSORSHIP WAS STILL NECESSARY. WHEN QUESTIONED ABOUT THESE OTHER FACTORS, THE PRESIDENT BECAME VAGUE AND EVASIVE. HE FINALLY MENTIONED PEDRO JOAQUIN CHAMORRO'S OBSESSIVE CAMPAIGN TO MALIGN HIM AND THE GON.

3. I EXPRESSED OUR GENERAL CONCERN THAT PRESS CENSORSHIP, BESIDES APPEARING UNNECESSARY ON INTERNAL SECURITY GROUNDS, COULD CREATE ADVERSE REACTIONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND ELSEWHERE THAT MIGHT BE  
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HRAMFUL TO OUR RELATIONS. THE PRESIDENT REPLIED THAT HE WAS WELL

AWARE OF THE DANGERS BUT THAT THIS WAS, AS HE PUT IT, "MY BAILIWICK."

4. COMMENT: THE PRESIDENT TACITLY ADMITTED THAT THE PUBLIC ORDER  
JUSTIFICATION FOR AN EXTENSION OF THE STATE OF SIEGE WAS LACKING AND  
IMPLIED THAT HIS MAIN CONCERN WAS PEDRO JOAQUIN CHAMORRO'S  
LA PRENSA.

5. LAST WEEK IT APPEARED THAT THE STATE OF SIEGE MIGHT BE  
TERMINATED SOON (SEE REFTEL). SINCE THEN THE PRO-CENSORSHIP FORCES  
WITHIN THE CABINET AND OUTSIDE VIDENTLY REMOVED ANY DOUBTS THAT  
PRESIDENT MAY HAVE ENTERTAINED ABOUT THE WISDOM OF GOVERNING WITH  
CENSORSHIP.  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** MARTIAL LAW, CENSORSHIP, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 14 JAN 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** blochd0  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Document Unique ID:** 00  
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**TAGS:** PGOV, PINS, NU, (SOMOZA DEBAYLE, ANASTASIO)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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